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ABSTRACT

Intended for parents of preschool handicapped children, the guide provides information on how children learn and suggests activities within the daily routine that can be used as learning opportunities for the child. Following an introduction are milestone charts for the areas of cognition, communication, gross motor, fine motor, self help, and social skills. Charts are divided into the following age ranges: 0 to 3 months, 3 to 6 months, 6 to 9 months, 9 to 12 months, 12 to 18 months, 18 to 24 months, 24 to 36 months, 36 to 48 months, 48 to 60 months, and 60 plus months. It is pointed out that the child learns by using his/her senses, by experimenting, by imitating, by exploring, and by playing. Suggestions for helping the child learn include going from the known to the unknown, keeping tasks simple to match short attention spans, and being aware of the child's limitations. Ideas and activities are suggested for creating a positive home learning environment. Among the activities described are the following: provide the infant with stimuli to motivate movement of eyes, head, body, arms, and legs; use everyday situations as learning experiences; let the child explore the many movements of his/her hands; and praise, smile, and encourage repetition when the child makes a new sound. The guide concludes with activities which illustrate how everyday occasions can be used as learning experiences. (SW)

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PARENT HELPER

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN BIRTH TO FIVE



Maryland State
Department of Education

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Parent Helper

Handicapped Children Birth to Five

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INTRODUCTION

Parents are the most important adults in a child's life. The *Parent Helper: Handicapped Children Birth to Five* was developed to help you and your child form a partnership with educators to foster your child's growth and self-esteem.

As your child's primary caretaker and teacher, you design the everyday situations for your child to explore his/her capabilities. The approach described in the material that follows challenges you to take advantage of daily routine activities in everyday settings. Your child needs to be praised, prodded, encouraged, and enjoyed. He/she needs your persistence, reassurance, and love to reach his/her potential.

The intent of the *Parent Helper: Handicapped Children Birth To Five* is to provide general concepts of child growth and development, present information on how the child learns, and suggest activities within the daily routine that can be used as learning opportunities for the child. While you may need to modify an activity to meet your child's needs, the guide will provide you with a sequence of steps to follow in each skill area.



GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE ... PATTERNS OF GROWTH



From birth to five years of age, many changes occur. The young child may learn to control body movements, communicate in a complex language, apply thinking skills, and make friends. While developing a real sense of identity, the child is discovering who he/she is and what he/she can do.

In the developmental process each skill builds upon the next. The sequence of normal child development covers the areas of:

Cognition . . . knowing, including awareness, remembering, and thinking.

Gross Motor . . . large muscle use (e.g., sitting, crawling, walking).

Fine Motor . . . small muscle development (e.g., eating, using fingers).

Self-Help . . . caring for self (e.g., feeding, toileting, dressing).

Social . . . self-awareness and response to other people.

While there is a great deal of difference in the rate that children progress, developmental norms do give a sequence for development. The sequence enables the person working with a particular child to begin where the child is developmentally and to pattern the acquisition of new skills in a more predictable manner.

The following Developmental Milestone Charts include the areas of cognition, communication, gross motor, fine motor, self-help, and social skills. They provide a reference for the approximate ages various skills emerge.



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 0 - 3 Months

COGNITION:

Responds to new sound with movement or with voice
Follows movement of hands with eyes
Looks at an object or person
Shows positive response to familiar sounds

COMMUNICATION:

Makes small, throaty noises
Coos expressively, vocalizes
Smiles at mother's voice
Responds vocally to a friendly person

GROSS MOTOR:

Waves hands and kicks feet when on back
Turns head to either side when lying on stomach or back
Rolls from side to back
Gains head control in upright position

FINE MOTOR:

Follows movement up, down, and across
Glances from one object to another
Grasps object when placed in hand
Watches movement of own hands

SELF-HELP:

Demonstrates sucking reflex
Opens mouth to bottle or breast and sucks
Demonstrates gag reflex

SOCIAL:

Enjoys being tickled and fondled
Smiles spontaneously
Smiles in response to smile, voice, or touch
Expresses pleasure with physical activity
Quiets when picked up
Maintains brief eye contact during feeding

About 3 - 6 Months

COGNITION:

Repeats action on objects
Recognizes mother
Looks at hand and object when grasping
Uses visually directed reaching
Secures partially hidden object
Imitates cooing sounds
Uses movement or sound to continue an interesting game.

COMMUNICATION:

Turns head to locate sounds and voices
Responds to voice by sound or movement
Vocalizes sound patterns; begins babbling
Varies crying to different stimuli

GROSS MOTOR:

Pushes up from ground, lifts head and chest
Pushes self to sitting position; sits alone momentarily
Rolls from stomach to back
Straightens hips, lifts legs when on stomach
Reaches for feet and brings to mouth

FINE MOTOR:

Holds object directly in front, both hands
Uses fingers and palm to hold objects
Bangs objects in play

SELF-HELP:

Eats baby foods from spoon
Anticipates feeding with increased activity
Reaches for and holds bottle

SOCIAL:

Laughs aloud often
Notices strangers
Voices pleasure or displeasure
Approaches image in a mirror
Cries when left alone or put down
Likes physical play
Shows awareness of strange environments

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 6 - 9 Months

COGNITION:

Imitates simple, familiar gestures (e.g. shaking toy)
Responds to names
Uncovers toy that has been partially hidden
Tracks and locates object falling out of view

COMMUNICATION:

Vocalizes consonant/vowel syllables and two syllables (e.g., gaga)
Engages in vocal play; uses word-like expressions
Uses vocalization for attention
Responds to name vocally

GROSS MOTOR:

Bears weight in standing position
Sits unsupported and reaches for toys
Lifts head when on back
Rolls from back to stomach
Crawls forward with stomach on floor
Bounces when held in standing position
Maintains balance on hands and knees
Assists in pulling to standing position

FINE MOTOR:

Grasps with thumb and side of index finger
Moves wrist to manipulate toy or object
Reaches for and obtains objects 10"-12" away
Retains one cube when given another
Transfers objects from one hand to the other
Claps hands

SELF-HELP:

Begins chewing movements
Reaches for and holds bottle
Drinks from a cup with help
Manipulates finger foods
Holds, bites, and chews biscuit

SOCIAL:

Plays peek-a-boo
Expresses pleasure when playfully handled
Reacts playfully to mirror image
Plays unattended for short periods of time
Understands and adapts to social signals (smile, harsh tone)
Shows displeasure when familiar toy is removed

About 9 - 12 Months

COGNITION:

Plays simple games, (e.g., pat-a-cake)
Acts on or with visible toys or objects
Moves to reach a desired object
Finds a completely hidden object
Looks at pictures in book
Touches adult or object to cause action or movement

COMMUNICATION:

Plays pat-a-cake; waves bye-bye
Imitates coughs, tongue clicks, lip smacks
Stops activities in response to "no"
Repeats what adult says
Understands a few words and gestures
Uses jargon or non-meaningful monologue
Imitates new words.

GROSS MOTOR:

Creeps forward on hands and knees
Pulls to standing, using stable support
Sits from standing with help and then alone
Walks holding on to furniture
Walks with support
Lets go of support and stands alone

FINE MOTOR:

Uses index finger alone
Purposely releases an object
Makes marks on piece of paper with pencil or crayon
Grasps with finger and thumb
Pokes at objects with index finger
Bangs spoon or cup

SELF-HELP:

Ceases drooling
Licks food off utensil or from sides of mouth
Finger feeds for part of meal
Usually weaned from breast or bottle
Drinks from cup, with some liquid spilling from mouth

SOCIAL:

Laughs aloud in play with adult
Responds appropriately to adult's change of mood
Temporarily responds to "no"
Shows preference for one toy over another

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 12 - 18 Months

COGNITION:

Places one round shape in a form board
Uses a tool such as a stick to obtain objects
Recognizes shapes in a puzzle board
Imitates unfamiliar sound patterns
Imitates unfamiliar gestures
Points to an object named or wanted
Imitates at least one facial gesture
Attempts to find causal mechanism to operate toy

COMMUNICATION:

Shakes head from side to side to mean "no"
Uses first spontaneous words
Uses one word to express an idea (e.g., "milk")
Follows simple command
Performs requested actions

GROSS MOTOR:

Makes four or five stepping movements in place
Creeps upstairs
Stands alone in the middle of floor
Walks backwards and sideways
Climbs upstairs, one hand held
Creeps downstairs backwards
Rises to standing position independently
Walks alone

FINE MOTOR:

Places cubes in a cup
Uses both hands to perform same action
Holds crayon and scribbles on paper
Stacks one block on top of another
Builds tower of three or four cubes

SELF-HELP:

Picks up cup and drinks
Spoon feeds without many spills
Removes simple garments on request
Cooperates in dressing by moving limbs
Indicates wet or soiled diaper

SOCIAL:

Repeats a performance laughed at
Exhibits specific emotional behaviors such as fear, joy, and anger
Gives affection — returns a kiss or hug
Makes some decisions for self

About 18 - 24 Months

COGNITION:

Identifies parts of own body
Places three shapes correctly in a form board
Names five parts of the body
Attends to nursery rhymes
Points to pictures in a book upon request
Imitates sounds, words, or body movements
Activates objects directly
Finds object from indirect visual cues

COMMUNICATION:

Uses two words to describe actions
Uses one word for many similar things
Refers to self by name
Uses two-word possessives (e.g., "Daddy car")
Follows verbal instructions
Uses familiar names of objects

GROSS MOTOR:

Walks downstairs with support
Jumps in place
Pushes/pulls a light object
Sits directly in small chair
Runs length of the room without falling
Stands on one foot momentarily
Picks up toy from floor when standing-up

FINE MOTOR:

Imitates vertical crayon stroke
Places three shapes in a form board
Manipulates an object with fingers and thumb alone
Imitates stacking tower of four cubes
Turns pages of book one by one

SELF-HELP:

Zips and unzips large zipper
Attempts to put on shoes
Removes all clothes without help
Attempts to put familiar objects away
Unwraps enclosed food such as crackers
Ceases activity for naptime

SOCIAL:

Cries or fusses for short period when parents are absent
Plays alone for extended period of time
Enjoys accompanying adult on short walks
Shows intense positive and negative reactions
Becomes easily frustrated
Shows pride in actions
Pays attention to other children

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 24 - 36 Months

COGNITION:

- Matches familiar objects, sorts objects in two categories
- Enjoys short stories read from picture book, describes simple pictures
- Understands one-to-one relationship of sets up to ten
- Points to "one" and "many"
- Exhibits a sense of ownership, (e.g., "It's mine")
- Recognizes self in mirror
- Engages in domestic make-believe play
- Places five shapes correctly in a form board

COMMUNICATION:

- Joins in songs and rhythm
- Uses own first name, says complete name
- Uses three-word phrases
- Uses word "no" appropriately
- Uses simple pronouns
- Asks questions with appropriate tone
- Carries out two-step commands
- Uses regular plurals

GROSS MOTOR:

- Walks up and down stairs holding rail
- Stands on balance beam with assistance
- Kicks ball without support
- Runs and jumps
- Throws ball overhand
- Rides tricycle using pedals
- Balances on one foot
- Walks up stairs with support, alternating feet

FINE MOTOR:

- Imitates drawing horizontal and vertical strokes
- Snips or makes small cuts with blunt scissors
- Strings three or four beads
- Completes form board of five or more pieces
- Begins to hold crayon appropriately
- Builds tower of nine blocks

SELF-HELP:

- Gets drink unassisted
- Eats an entire meal with spoon, begins to use a fork
- Toilets with some help and has only occasional accidents
- Puts on simple clothing (e.g., hat, pants, shoes, socks) and then all clothes except for buttoning
- Washes and dries hands with assistance
- Brushes teeth with some assistance

SOCIAL:

- Varies mood in response to reactions of others
- Plays or works on own project when near other children
- Initiates own play activities, plays in simple games
- Indulges in pretend or make-believe play
- Requests that specific stories be read
- Avoids hazardous situations
- Attempts to take turns



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 36 - 48 Months

COGNITION:

Matches two or three colors
Knows concepts big/little, fast/slow, long/short
Tells a simple story
Matches pictures of like objects
Rote counts up to three
Completes a form board of five or more pieces
Discriminates size, weight, and length

COMMUNICATION:

Asks questions beginning with who, what, or where
Uses possessives correctly (e.g., "Mommy's car")
Uses regular past tense, prepositions in, on, and under
Learns to whisper
Uses normal loudness and tone
Uses language in imaginative play
Uses sentences most of the time

GROSS MOTOR:

Catches a bounced ball
Walks downstairs without support alternating feet
Jumps forward without falling
Throws ball overhand
Stands on balance beam unassisted
Walks entire length of tape line on floor
Climbs to top of slide and slides down

FINE MOTOR:

Strings $\frac{1}{2}$ " beads
Copies a circle
Puts together objects requiring fine muscle control
Cuts along $\frac{1}{4}$ " line with a continuous opening and closing motion
Laces shoes - not necessarily with pattern

SELF-HELP:

Buttons and unbuttons larger buttons
Completely dresses with verbal assistance
Wipes up spills
Brushes teeth with verbal assistance
Washes and dries hands independently
Completely cares for self at toilet

SOCIAL:

Initiates play in group and remains to play
Shares toys upon suggestion
Performs simple errands
Plays cooperatively with other children
Consciously identifies with parents
Shows sympathy and concern when appropriate
Enjoys helping and participating



DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 48 - 60 Months

COGNITION:

Knows own age
Knows day and night
Matches and names four primary colors
Counts 10 objects; answers how many on request
Sequences pictures in order of occurrence
Answers questions about a story being read
Names three objects from memory
Chooses own categories for sorting

COMMUNICATION:

Regularly uses pronouns (e.g., he, she) and possessive pronouns
Uses some adverbs
Verbally calls attention to own performance
Carries out series of three unrelated commands
Uses future tense
Names attributes of objects (size, shape, color)
Uses "no" and "not" appropriately
Uses contracted negatives (e.g., can't, don't)



GROSS MOTOR:

Gallops
Walks full length of balance beam without falling
Kicks rolling ball toward target
Skips, alternating feet
Hops on one foot
Catches a thrown ball
Walks on tiptoes for 10 feet

FINE MOTOR:

Draws a picture
Demonstrates hand preference
Copies shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle) from example
Draws stick figures
Cuts out a circle and other simple shapes

SELF-HELP:

Blows nose independently
Serves self at table from bowl without spilling
Eats with spoon and fork skillfully
Stays dry overnight
Distinguishes between front and back of clothing
Plays in yard with periodic monitoring
Hangs coat on hook

SOCIAL:

Calls attention to own performance
Uses social response (e.g., please, thank you, raises hand, stands in line)
Chooses another child to play with
Talks about family
Prefers to be with peers rather than adults
Controls emotions and expresses them in acceptable ways

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

About 60 + Months

COGNITION:

Matches sets of items to numerals, 1 - 10
Sequences up to five daily activities
Retells a brief story
Gives home address
Knows left from right

COMMUNICATION:

Tells story by reading the pictures
Asks meaning of abstract words
Speaks fluently and correctly, except for confusions of s, f, th

GROSS MOTOR:

Jumps rope
Roller skates
Hops 2 - 3 yards forward on each foot separately
Jumps on toes only from height of 12" landing
Runs with arms swinging in opposition to feet

FINE MOTOR:

Prints capital letters and simple words with frequent reversals
Uses appropriate hand placement while cutting and writing
Laces own shoes
Prints numbers 1 - 5

SELF-HELP:

Brushes and combs hair unassisted
Puts toys away in box
Dresses and undresses alone
Crosses street safely

SOCIAL:

Comforts playmate in distress
Plans and builds constructively
Understands need for rules and fair play
Relates clock time to daily schedule



For the handicapped child, this sequence may be delayed due to his/her own limitations, but handicaps can, in many cases, be compensated for or, at the very least, be recognized in the teaching process.

The handicapped child requires much patience, encouragement, and secure loving surroundings in which to progress. For the child to reach his/her potential, a real team effort is needed. Parents, educators, and other professionals, as partners, must work together to set the stage for growth.



LEARNING ... THE DISCOVERY PROCESS



How does your child learn?

- **BY USING HIS/HER SENSES.** He/she smells sweet vanilla, tastes salty crackers, touches a soft kitten, hears a loud bang, and sees a brightly colored mobile, all the while learning about the world outside himself/herself.
- **BY EXPERIMENTING.** The child begins to learn about the world around by trying new ideas and through trial and error. He/she may try to use an object in different ways. For example, blocks may be stacked, pushed along the carpet like a toy car, put in boxes, or banged together like cymbals.
- **BY IMITATING.** The child observes the actions of others and imitates those actions, thus acquiring new skills. Repeating these actions eventually leads to mastery.
- **BY EXPLORING.** The child moves about discovering more about people, places, and things.
- **BY PLAYING.** The child learns how things work, realizes that he/she can make things happen, and develops problem-solving skills.



What can you do to help your child learn?

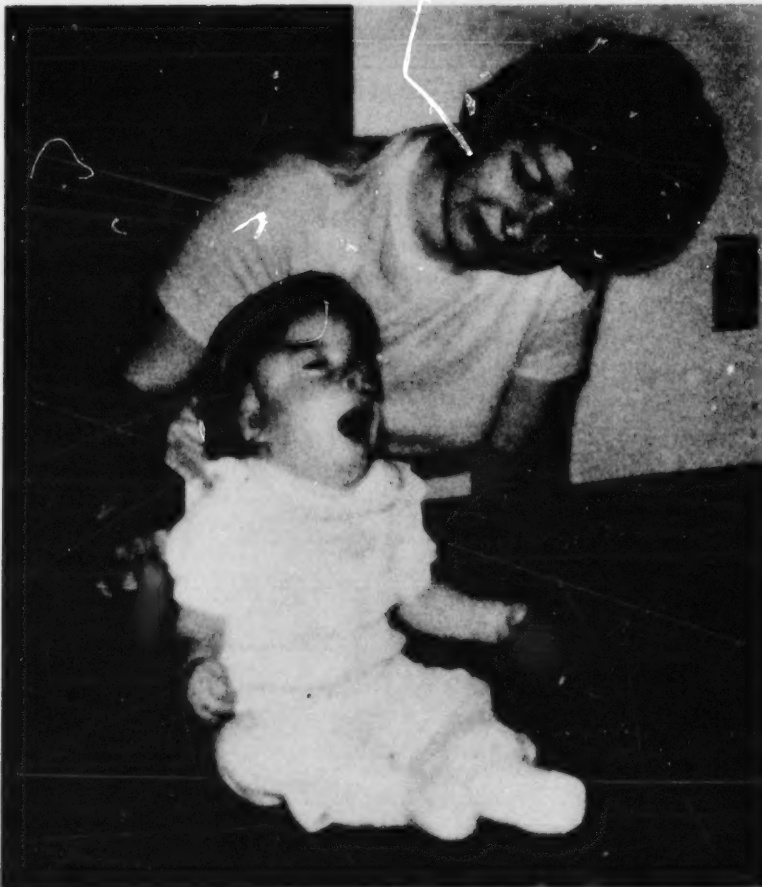
- **GO FROM THE KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN.** Let your child work with what is familiar before you start something new. Give the youngster all the cues needed to achieve success the first time. That way, the unknown becomes a playful challenge, not something to be feared (e.g., put together a familiar puzzle, then help him/her to put together a new, more difficult one).
- **VARY YOUR CHILD'S ACTIVITIES.** Make your youngster's day a bit different: introduce a new food or have a friend come over for lunch. But also remember some days you need a rest, and your child will do fine with hugs, "conversation," and the old routine.
- **KEEP TASKS SIMPLE TO MATCH SHORT ATTENTION SPANS.** If, however, your child's attention span does not begin to lengthen with repeated efforts, some special adapted exercises may be needed. At that point, it would be best to consult with your child's teacher and/or therapist.
- **PROMOTE FREE EXPLORATION AND LET YOUR CHILD EXPERIMENT WITH OBJECTS.** As discovery is made through trial and error, in the beginning stages there need not be a right or a wrong response. Blocks don't have to be stacked; they can be put inside a truck or sat on!
- **PLAY WITH YOUR CHILD.** Select activities and toys that are appropriate to his/her developmental level.
- **BE AWARE OF YOUR CHILD'S LIMITATIONS.** Realize that adaptations must be made for the child whose senses are impaired or whose movement is limited. Vary the positions in which he/she plays, make objects and textures reachable, limit the noise level; and be sensitive to the child's moods, interests, and needs.
- **PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE.** Set up the situation for the child to be successful and show your pleasure in his/her success through hugs, smiles, or special treats. Give assistance to a frustrated child and then reward him/her with plenty of praise for attempting the task.



HOME . . . THE CHILD'S FIRST LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



Research has shown that babies start learning from the moment they are born. The home is the child's first learning environment, and, therefore, the parents are the child's first and most important teachers. A child's environment means the total surroundings, that is, the space, objects, and people that impact on him/her. Parents can create a caring and stimulating environment in which the child can learn and grow. For the handicapped child, this is vitally important since he/she will need additional help to explore the world around him/her. The following ideas and activities are suggestions for ways you can create a positive home learning environment. You should, however, talk to the child's teacher and therapist to make sure that these are appropriate.



WHEN YOUR CHILD IS AN INFANT ...

Dress baby loosely so that he/she can move easily.

Touching aids the child to move the body part you are stimulating.

Main body movements develop before the child can adequately use his/her hands or feet.

Provide your infant with stimuli to motivate movement of eyes, head, body, arms, and legs.

Stimulation to all of the senses is important.

Check the Developmental Milestone Charts frequently to determine the level at which your child is functioning.

Lay the infant on a rug or towel on the floor. Make sure he/she can move freely. Play with him/her and encourage the infant to kick his/her legs, and reach with his/her arms.

Blow on the baby's legs and arms. Rub them with your hand, and then if you get no response, move the arm or leg in the motion you would like the child to make.

Get your child used to a variety of positions: lying on his/her tummy or back, propped up on his/her side with pillows, in your arms.

Vary the scenery you use to motivate the child. For example, hang a mobile above the child's crib and later on place a simple picture on one or both sides. Change baby's location, too.

Splash, kick, and massage limbs in the tub. Toss a bright ball between two people with the baby propped in the middle. Let the baby feel different textures (sponge, rubber, paintbrush, etc.).

Make a game out of your "teaching" and "checking" sessions. Provide a variety of objects to encourage response. Use simple items: colored ribbons tied on the crib posts, a soft rubber ball, a brightly colored stuffed animal.

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS READY TO EXPLORE ...

Set up the learning situation for success.

Prop the child on his/her side at an angle that will allow him/her to roll over easily. Decrease the help gradually until he/she rolls by himself/herself. Entice the child with a bright toy.

You may be the best motivator of all.

While your child is on his/her tummy, face him/her and encourage the child to come to you. At first the child may only push up on his/her forearms and raise his/her head to look at you, but he/she eventually will move both arms and legs in an effort to reach you.

Use your child's interest in himself/herself.

Play games in front of a mirror with your child on your lap. Prop him/her up to sit or place the child on his/her tummy to play.

Use everyday situations as learning experiences.

After his/her bath, encourage the child to practice rolling over; wrap the child loosely in a towel or blanket and gently pull the edge of the towel so that the child rolls over. When the child is strong enough, use a jumper chair or infant seat for him/her to play in while you work in the kitchen. (Check with therapist first.)



Before selecting an activity, make sure that it is appropriate with the child's sequential level of development.

When playing with your child, jot down what the child can do alone, with a little assistance, with a lot of assistance, or not at all. For those movements that need assistance, keep track of the amount of assistance you need to give. Remember, first the infant sits, then he/she crawls. First the child walks, then he/she runs.

WHEN YOUR CHILD BEGINS TO USE HIS/HER HANDS . . .

Hands must be noticed before they can be used. Let your child explore the many movements of his/her hands.

Fine motor activities are a combination of several motions.

Fine motor behavior goes from the simple to the more complex; a grasp-release response comes prior to purposeful movement with an object in hand.

A child needs to "explore" with his/her fingers and with objects he/she can hold in his/her fingers.

The child must be encouraged to use his/her thumb and fingers in order to complete more complex fine motor tasks.

Stimulate the child to move his/her hands. Help the child to rotate his/her hands at the wrist, clap hands together, grasp and release objects, hold objects with fingers. Assist the child to play "pat-a-cake."

Encourage the child to grasp an object and then do something with it: drop it, put it in something, shake it, bang it, place it in the other hand. Use "noisy" objects (e.g., bean bags, bells, rattles) and vary the texture (e.g., rubber/cloth balls, metal/rubber dishware).

Hold out toys near the child's preferred hand. Assist the child to grasp the object only as necessary, and then to release it into a container. As time goes on, use less assistance and a smaller container. When the child builds up his/her accuracy, he/she is ready for stacking toys. Finally, he/she is ready to stack smaller objects (blocks) and fit items into holes (e.g., pegs, keys into keyholes).

Fingerpainting and water play are two activities to build upon the sensation of movement. Wide circular motions may be made with or without crayons/pencils. Wide and small scribbling should be encouraged. Imitation of movement may be introduced at this time. (Make sure to use large handle brushes and "fat" crayons or pencils at first.)

Use "finger pops" or small, rubber squeak toys as motivators. Encourage the child to imitate your grasp on the toy. As the child's grasp improves, he/she is ready for cutting activities. At first he/she can cut, not following lines. Assist the child by turning the paper and helping to plan where to cut when he/she is ready to cut out shapes.

WHEN YOUR CHILD . . .

makes a new sound

gestures for an object

can say several words

is naming objects and some action words
("go, ball, milk, Jane, mama")

is fussy and irritable

YOU MAY . . .

praise, smile, and encourage repetition.

say the object's name, wait for the child to try to imitate before giving him/her the object.

start a written list and paste it in a central place, add new words for everyone to see and use.

use two- and three-word sentences using some known and some new words: "Jane likes milk." "Play ball."

try to "interpret" this non-verbal communication and then express it for them: "Jane needs a quiet time (or nap or juice, etc.)."



begins using three- or four-word sentences

listens to music

learns a song or part of one

add descriptive words to your sentences: "Tommy likes *cold* milk." "Sing the song *softly*."

show your approval, use music for games, songs, dancing—happy times.

let your child "perform" for someone who will listen appreciatively and applaud.

WHEN YOUR CHILD . . .

shows interest in an activity or place

hears a noise

makes an interesting sound

watches TV for more than a minute

wants you to read to him/her

imitates what he/she hears and sees

asks you a question

YOU MAY . . .

think of all the related new words and stories you may use to add to his/her language. For example, when you bake cookies, say, "First we *pour*, then, we *stir*." Visit the zoo and later, talk about it.

listen and talk about the sound.

repeat the sound and play a little game, each taking turns making sounds and imitating (clapping, banging, splashing).

watch "selective" TV with your child to encourage new words and ideas.

let your child supply known words using pictures for cues and gradually increase his/her participation talking as well as listening.

use puppets to encourage imitation and imagination and to model.

use short clear words to answer, *but always answer.*

NOTE: ASK TEACHER AND/OR THERAPISTS FOR HELP WHENEVER NEEDED!!



SAMPLE EXERCISES



While it is important that a specific time be set aside for you to work with your child, there are many opportunities within the daily routine that can become learning experiences for him./her. You can use such occasions as meal time, laundry time, and shopping for groceries to teach your child. In this way, you not only aid him/her to acquire and develop skills, but also, make the handicapped child a real part of the family routine.

The following activities illustrate how everyday occasions can be used as learning experiences.

DESCRIPTION

Stacey, almost two, has remarkable blue eyes, bouncing pony tails, two hearing aids, and cerebral palsy. Her doctors recognized her serious motor difficulty in the first months of her life, but her hearing loss remained invisible until her parents sensed a problem.

After much testing by a patient and skilled audiologist, Stacey was fitted with aids and a powerful sound transmitter that she wears on her chest. However, the audiologist feels that the first step is to help Stacey learn to pay attention to loud sounds and to understand what makes the sounds. Later, listening and responding to softer sounds and complicated sounds, like words, will be tried. Learning to listen, also called auditory training, can go on at the same time she is being taught simple gestures and signs for naming the people, things, and actions that are important in her life.

Stacey cannot walk yet, but she sits well in an adapted high chair.

SAMPLE TEACHING ACTIVITY

Stacey and her mom are playing a listening game while slowly getting the living and dining room vacuumed. The rules of the game are simple. Mom wants Stacey to respond one way each time she hears the vacuum go on and another way when she hears it go off.

Stacey's signals for yes and no are of her own creation. Stacey's parents noticed that when she wanted to be picked up or wanted more of her favorite foods, she would "reach" a little with her head. They latched on to this purposeful movement and showed her how she could also signal no by putting her chin down. She practiced her no on spinach and beets. This homemade gesturing was the beginning of a real communication system between Stacey and her family.

Mom begins the listening game by helping Stacey turn the vacuum switch on and feeling the vibration and suction of the hose. With a few Cheerios, she shows Stacey how the vacuum works. She signs and says "all gone" as the Cheerios disappear into the vacuum cleaner. Because Stacey is sitting next to the vacuum and paying close attention, her mom is pretty sure she is hearing the sound. To check, she switches the vacuum off when Stacey isn't looking. She checks Stacey's face for a response, models the no gesture, then points to the machine and signs "all gone."

Together they switch the vacuum on and Stacey's mom models the yes signal while pointing to the loud machine. They practice switching it on and off together until Stacey gives the yes and no signal by herself. After Stacey has learned the rules, her mom gets down to the business of vacuuming the rugs, but pauses frequently to switch the machine on and off, checking for Stacey's signals and congratulating her for good listening.

She gradually moves farther away from Stacey, making her listen harder, and eventually gets the rugs clean. Because of Stacey's age and attention span, they spend only a few minutes a day playing this game. But Stacey has learned the rules of this listening game which open up many opportunities for practice around the house with her parents.

Some Noisy Ideas:

Kitchen Sounds

Dishwasher
Blender
Mixer
Running Water

Bathroom Sounds

Blow Dryer
Electric Razor
Flushing Toilet
Running Bathwater

Basement Sounds

Washer
Dryer
Power Hand Tools

Living Room Sounds

TV
Stereo

Outside Sounds

Car Engines
Motorcycles
Lawn Mowers
Fire Engines

DESCRIPTION

Mark is a three year old boy with Down's Syndrome. Although he can understand many words, his speaking vocabulary is limited to about 40 words, most of them difficult to understand. Although his muscle tone is poor, he can walk. He is a pleasant, loving little boy who enjoys playing "learning" games with members of his family. They are very interested in Mark's progress and watch very closely as new skills develop. For instance, mother tapes a list on the refrigerator of words that Mark can say. She adds to the list as he learns and uses new words.

SAMPLE TEACHING ACTIVITY

When Granddaddy comes to visit, he and Mark have a fine time spending much of the visit together. When they go to the grocery store, Granddaddy finds this a good time to help Mark with his vocabulary development. As Granddaddy takes items from the shelf, he asks Mark to name them. Granddaddy always starts with items such as milk and juice that Mark can say already. As he correctly names them, Granddaddy smiles and claps his hands saying, "Good talking, Mark." Since Mark delights in the approval of others for his accomplishments, he will work hard for smiles, claps, or hugs.

When Granddaddy wants to introduce a new word, he tells Mark the name of the item and asks him to repeat it. For example, when Granddaddy is teaching the name for banana, he would say, "This is a banana. What is it, Mark?" Any attempt such as, nana, will be accepted and praised by Granddaddy. He is also careful to introduce only one new word and to give Mark practice on other occasions, such as dinner time, so these words will become a part of Mark's speaking vocabulary. When Mark "owns" the word, it is added to his list on the refrigerator door which makes Mark feel good as he sees the list getting longer.

Many of the suggestions in this guide have come from parents of handicapped children; others have been successfully used by teachers and other school personnel. In using the suggested activities, it is hoped that you will be able to observe your child from a new perspective as you assist him/her in "discovering" the world.



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